



Directed Research Project

Master (M.Sc.) in Management

Topic:

**-The Effect of Brand Infidelity on Brand Commitment-
An Experiment within the Body Care Market**



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Date: 06. January 2017

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Executive Summary

The brand commitment in the relationship marketing dimension plays an important role for companies. It can lead to higher profitability, as consumers tend to repurchase, refer the brand to others and retain with that brand. Within the beauty care market, it is even more important to gain committed consumers as the alternatives are high. But what happens, when consumers have temporary interest in a competitive brand even if they are committed?

This work project wanted to know more about the commitment factors and investigate the positive effect of temporary interest into a competitive brand within the body lotion market. Therefore, the main hypothesis that was researched, was that even with attraction towards a competitive brand, consumers in a long-term and high level commitment tend to stick to their favored brand and even buy more.

To be able to answer the central research hypothesis, a better understanding of the concept ‘brand commitment’ and its factors, as well as the body care market in Portugal was needed. These insights derived from studying literature not only from the marketing area, but also from the interpersonal relationship domain.

An experimental interview type was chosen, in order to conduct and analyze results regarding factors of commitment, anticipated consumption and temporary interest into a competitive brand. The questionnaire was conducted on field with 82 female participants, aged between 18 and 55+. It included two main parts with ‘Promotional Material Part’ and the ‘Exposure Part’.

From the results of this investigation, it can be concluded that the female consumers that are in a long-term commitment are more excited and attracted to competitive brands. Nevertheless, they still stick to their favored one and use it more, as attraction and excitement is transferred. This finding is even stronger in the ‘Exposure Part’. Thus, the main hypothesis could be proven.

1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In markets that are becoming increasingly competitive nowadays, building up consumer brand loyalty and commitment is the key of a long-term sustainable and competitive advantage (Aaker 1996; Chakraborty, Srivastava & Marshall, 2007). In the brand domain, commitment is a part of brand loyalty (Martin & Goodell, 1991; Dholakia, 1997) and represents one of the most researched areas in consumer behavior (Muncy & Hunt, 1984; Dholakia, 1997). Other approaches have defined it as a component of product involvement (Lastovicka & Gardner, 1977). Studies have shown that highly loyal customers account for a significantly higher percentage of a company's revenues (Owens, Hardman & Keillor, 2001). There are multiple theories of commitment in the consumer behavior literature.

Nevertheless, the proliferation of new brands towards a saturation of some market industries, the increase of sales promotions and other alternative marketing strategies such as branded gifts, the boom of alternative distribution strategies and the decrease of advertisement impact, make maintaining brand committed consumers nowadays more difficult. They get exposed to many options, which fuels temporary interest and attraction as having delightful interactions with brands other than their favored one. Researchers have investigated the consequences and antecedents of it, but have failed to investigate the positive effects for the own favored and committed brand. I argue that temporary interest and daydreaming about competing brands paradoxically can increase the brand commitment between consumer and its favored brand. The main reason is that arousal and attraction towards a competitive brand can be transferred to the favored brand. Therefore, the attraction of the competing brand can even maximize loyalty and in this way strengthen the commitment towards the own brand.

1.2 Research Relevance and Objective

Previous research showed that consumers who are interested in attractive alternatives tend to be less loyal towards their favored brand and reduce their commitment. This can even lead to a relationship dissolution (Seabright, Levinthal & Fichman, 1992). However, less research was done investigating the positive consequences of interacting with attractive alternatives or temporary interest into another brand, while the consumer is in a long-term committed brand relationship in a certain product category.

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the interaction between consumer and an attractive alternative brand other than the favored one and the impact on brand commitment. In doing so, this work project aims to understand the benefits on consumer's brand commitment that can arise in the attraction towards alternatives. It examines the effect of sampling or temporary interest and excitement with competing body care brands on consumer's loyalty and commitment towards their favored body care brand.

Therefore, the following research question will be asked:

Do consumers, who feel temporary interested towards another brand, become more or less committed to their favored body care brand?

The main hypothesis is that temporary excitement and attraction induced by positive exposure are causing consumers, who are in committed brand relationships, to increase their preference for their favored brand as well as their anticipated consumption of their brand. Under certain conditions, like similarity towards the favored brand and positive attributes that consumers are ascribed to the competitive brands, consumers tend to transfer this attraction towards their favored brands.

1.3 Structure of the Work Project

Before the actual research part, the work project explains key determinants in the Literature Review and defines brand commitment in more detail. After explaining the importance of brand commitment within the field of relationship marketing, the impact of brand infidelity on brand commitment will be presented with the important factors arousal and attraction. In the following part, the beauty care market will be depicted as well as statistical findings about women's loyalty and commitment towards the chosen product category of body lotions.

The main part of this work project follows with an explanation of the methodology and the design of a quantitative research. Afterwards results of the conducted research will be presented and discussed.

Finally, a conclusion will be given, which also includes limitations and further recommendations for this research topic.

2 Literature Review

In the following chapters, the environmental and theoretical foundations of the research project will be illuminated. These involve the two phenomena of temporary interest into a brand other than your favored one and brand commitment (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990). After having reviewed those concepts, they will be combined in order to, first, explore the nature of brand temporary interest and attraction in brands in relation to brand commitment and, second, its different factors that can stimulate it.

2.1 Relationship Marketing & Brand Commitment

Relationship Marketing has been studied by many researchers and marketers due to the increasing competition for consumers and market saturation in different industries. In theory, increasing customer retention leads to customer profitability as the customer stays with the company or brand and consumes more or even recommends the company or brand to others (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990). Many strategies have been implemented to reach this objective, for instance, with customer loyalty programs, as well as content and direct marketing strategies. The goal of these strategies is to identify, establish, enhance, and maintain those relationships in order to gain profit. In fact, relationship marketing is geared with interpersonal relationships against other binding methods with consumers and customers like contracts (Liljander & Roos, 2002). Moreover, normative methods like trust, satisfaction, commitment and loyalty are important and the basis within relationship marketing and are interlinked with each other. In addition, a lot of research was done, studying and analyzing the links and concepts that influence each other and overlap in various areas as studies in different fields show. Regarding this research project, the focus will be on brand commitment and its drivers in relation to repurchase intentions.

Morgan and Hunt (1994) have developed their “commitment-trust-theory”, stating that commitment and trust are key to all relational exchanges, putting both concepts at the same level as both are essential to build up long-term relationships. As a result, they have to be nurtured by every company with particular attention. Furthermore, a lot of research has been done about the link between commitment and loyalty. Dwyer, Schurr and Oh (1987), for instance, described commitment as “the highest state of relational bonding”. They see trust as an important factor to reach this level of relationship. Furthermore, they explain that commitment is reached naturally by providing a certain level of relationship duration, income from the company side and satisfaction on the

consumer or customer side. Despite this finding, the majority of researchers believe that loyalty has to be aspired in a customer relationship and relationship marketing in general. Some academics see commitment as one specific form of loyalty. In fact, Assel (1992) defines brand loyalty as being a commitment to a certain brand. This is supported by Bloemer and Kasper (1995), who also define loyalty as commitment to a brand, but also see that the strength of this commitment influences the class of loyalty: less committed customers show only spurious loyalty while highly committed customers are truly loyal. In addition to those definitions, Suh and Han (2003) describe commitment as “an enduring desire to continue a brand relationship”. Consumers are willing to improve and sustain an affective bond with a brand that makes them feel warm and enjoyable. Moreover, consumers with a high level of brand commitment would have stronger affective attachment for the brand (Keh et al., 2007).

2.1.1 Affective brand commitment

Commitment can be divided into affective, continuance commitment and normative commitment. For the scope of the work project, we are focusing on the first two.

Affective commitment is the emotional connection with a brand which represents a strong sense of personal identifications, too. It reflects the extent to which a consumer wants to maintain a relationship with a brand or company, which is based on their emotional attachment towards it (Amine, 1998). Affective brand commitment is not only implicates identification with the brand, but also on shared values with it. Therefore, it is the core of the consumer-brand relationship (Pring, 2007). According to Mc Alexander, Schouten and Koenig (2002), affective commitment explains the deep attachment to focused brands. Moreover, a research study in the banking services even found direct relations of affective commitment on repurchases intention. This means, emotional commitment is an important factor for changing purchasing behaviors and can even lead to increase the likelihood of repurchases (Verhoef, 2003).

2.1.2 Continuous brand commitment

Continuous brand commitment occurs, when consumers weigh pros and cons about a product or service. Most researchers agree that continuous commitment occurs when the benefits of staying in a relationship are higher than the costs of leaving one (Bansal et al, 2004). In addition, while affective commitment has emotional aspects, continuous commitment is a more rational component. The cost of leaving a relationship and a lack

of other alternatives create a rationale for the consumer to be committed to the brand (Bansal et al, 2004).

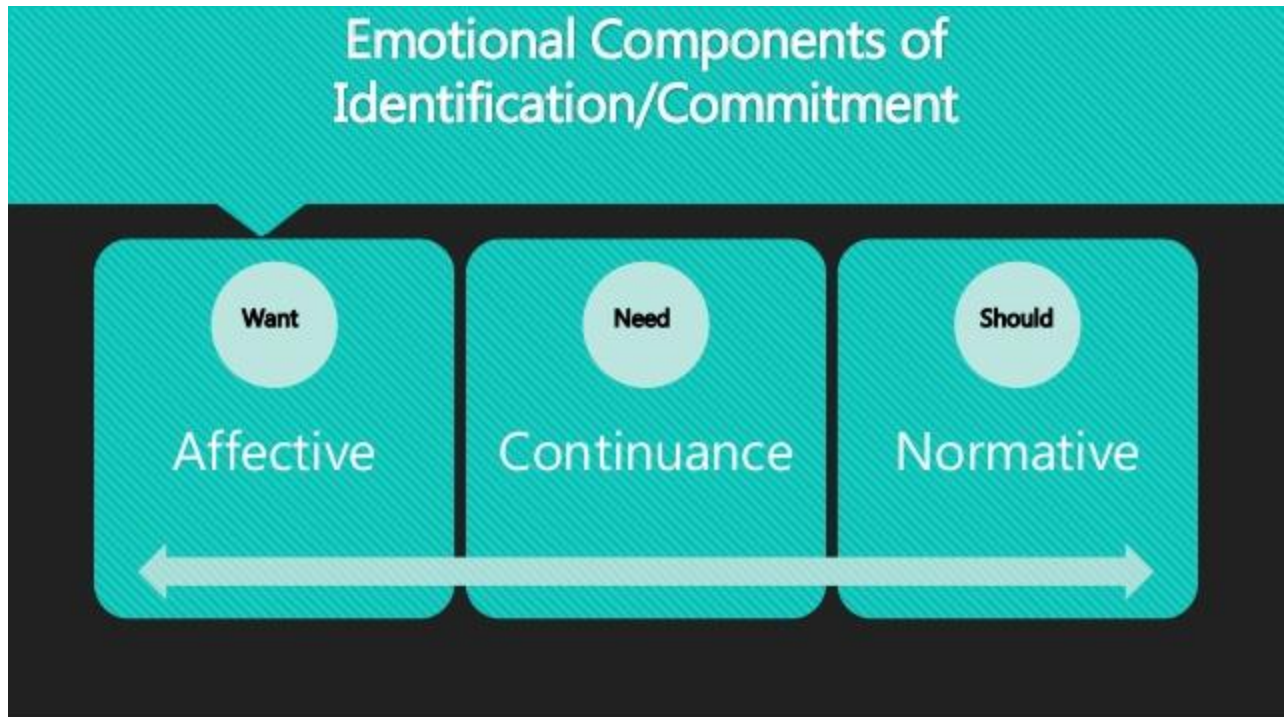


Figure 1: The different commitments summarized. (Source: Singelton, 2016)

2.2 Brand Infidelity and the impact on brand commitment

Within the commitment studies, most theories explain the risk and negative effects of available attractive alternatives. It is stated that this could cause dissolutions of relationships. Consumer experience positive feelings in the interpersonal and brand relationship areas, when few or poor-quality alternatives are present, or when the expected losses following a termination of the relationship are high (Rusbult & Buunk 1993; Rusbult 1980; Sung Campbell 2009).

In the brand relationship domain, it is more likely to be attracted to alternatives, as the market increasingly saturates. Consumers often look for other brands and test them. They enjoy different products from different brands within a product category in which they actually have a favored brand. Those actions can be seen as a form of infidelity towards a brand, which is consistent with the metaphorical view of interpersonal relationships. In fact, interpersonal relationships that are highly committed and satisfied are more protected from cheating behaviors (Fournier, Breazeale & Avery 2015). According to these authors, brand infidelity can be defined as the act of buying or using a different brand within the same category in which the consumer has a strongly committed relationship with another brand on a temporary basis. Moreover, the

consumer does not have the intention of undermining its current relationship with a brand, but does “flirt” with other brands occasionally (Fournier, Breazeale & Avery 2015). For instance, when walking by a window or a shelf in the supermarket, individual aspects can lead to excitement or attraction towards another brand, such as packaging, smell, look or relationship factors like dissatisfaction with current brand.

2.2.1 Brand Infidelity & Brand Arousal

According to Henning-Thurau et al. (2004), temporary interest into attractive alternatives brings out positive feelings and emotions, such as excitement, pleasure and arousal. When consumers are aroused and excited, they are energized and 'feel alive'. Three ways of arousal can be achieved: mentally, emotionally and physically. Cognitive (mentally) arousal can be achieved by curiosity, novelty and general interest. We want to learn or discover something. Physical arousal occurs, when our bodies are in a heightened sense of arousal, typically with adrenaline coursing through our system and activating our muscles. Affective or emotional arousal happens, when we are emotionally charged up and feel passionate about something. Affective arousal is the most important form of arousal, whereas cognitive and physical arousal are more likely to be accompanied with some degree of emotional sensation (ChangingMinds.org, 2016). Overall, feeling aroused towards a brand can arise in different ways and be a new experience. Several factors, such as relational, individual and situational factors are influencing this process. For instance, characteristics like habituation might cause lower excitement levels within an interaction, as well as the stability of a committed relationship, meaning the level of commitment in interpersonal and also brand relationships (Fournier, Breazeale & Avery 2015; Norton, Frost & Ariely 2007). Moreover, arousal can be higher in the beginning of a relationship, but decreases when a relationship gets more stable. According to Reimann (2010) a short-term relationship and temporary interest into a brand other than your favored one can even induce more arousal and excitement than within stable and long-term committed relationships (Reimann et al. 2011; Reimann 2010).

2.2.2 Brand Arousal vs. Brand Attraction

According to Newman and Werbel (1973, p.404) consumer attraction to the brand is an important dimension for a brand relationship. Moreover, arousal and attraction could affect brand commitment. When we consider emotional responses to consumption, arousal also directly influences a consumers' purchasing behavior (Li et al. 2012).

Emotional arousal, which extends preferences, can be another motivation for consumption, since consumers become more attached and involved with the brand (Holbrook & Hirschman 1982). Therefore, emotions such as pleasure and arousal affect a consumers' activity, intention and reaction with regard to consumption behavior (Li et al. 2012).

According to Foster et al. (1998), arousal eases the attraction to unrelated attractive target even when the original target that arouses the consumer obvious. This indicates that emotions can occur under certain conditions that make a target, a brand or a product salient (Jones, Fazio & Olson, 2009). This means, favored brands are more salient among individuals in committed brand relationships (Agrawal & Maheswaran 2005). Brand salience is defined as the extent to which a brand is cognitively accessible (Alba and Chattopadhyay 1986). Salience gives a brand an advantage because of habituation within consumer behavior. For instance, when consumers shop in a supermarket or store, they often rely on mental shortcuts or heuristics when they make a decision. Thus, heuristics have greater importance to things that have ready mental availability, the effect of which is the most salient brand (Samuel 2015). In addition, in consumers' minds favored brands are easier to access in a stronger committed relationship, as knowledge and memory about the favored brand is easier to recall. This phenomena "deletes" attraction towards a competitive brand, meaning that even though a consumer is window shopping and has temporary interest into a competitive brand, they would still decide for the favored brand. Therefore, as arousal and attraction relates more to a salient object, temporary interest into a competing brand can actually increase arousal and attraction towards the favored brand and therefore increase brand commitment.

3 Background Information on the Skin Care Market

3.1 European Cosmetic Industry and the Skin Care Market in Portugal

The term cosmetics is related to those products that are used to care for and clean the human body. The main objective of such products is to maintain the body in a good condition, protect it from the effects of the environment and aging process, change the appearance and make the body smell nicer (Financial Forum Cosmetics Sector, Special Issue, 1997). The cosmetics industry can be subdivided into ten product groups: Bath & Shower, Decorative Cosmetics (e.g. make-up), Deodorants, Fragrances, Hair Care, Skin Care (consisting of hand, body and face care), Oral Care, Shaving Products, Soap, Sun Products and Others (GlobalInsights 2007; Konig, 2007).

The European Union is the largest cosmetics market in the world. According to Global Insights (2007), the EU27 + Norway and Switzerland consumed, for instance, approximately €63.5 billion worth of products at retail sales prices in 2006. The market segments skin care, hair care, and toiletries occupy a market share of roughly 25% each within the EU countries. While Denmark and Sweden have the highest consumption (at 171€), Greece and Portugal have the lowest ones (121€ and 104€ per year). Moreover, within the European countries, consumers have growing concerns about skin cancer and exposure to harmful rays which leads to the growing use of sun care products. In addition, anti-aging creams and anti-cellulite skin care products are in high demand among aging populations as daily routines become more complex (Euromonitor, 2016).

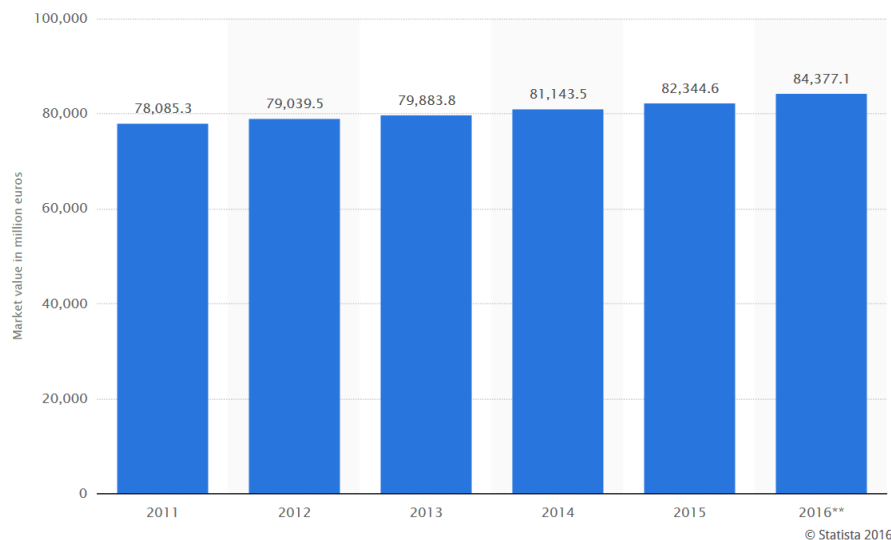


Figure 2: Statistic about the increasing market segment of the body

Within the Portuguese market, more confident consumers supported the recovery of beauty and personal care in 2015. Beauty and personal care is led by multinational companies in Portugal such as L'Oreal, Unilever or Beiersdorf, whereas local brands are practically non-existent. Beauty and personal care is expected to continue its recovery, stimulated by Portuguese consumers' increasing concerns regarding their personal image and appearance. Moreover, they purchase more skin care products in chemists/pharmacies and drugstores/pharmacies, while body care products shift from chemists/pharmacies and drugstores/pharmacies to mass retailers (Euromonitor, 2016).

3.2 Women's brand commitment in the beauty care market

Several theories are explaining the different behaviors of men and women regarding their relationship building. In fact, women are more likely to establish, but also maintain relationship with friends, family and social contexts (Gardner et al, 2002; Markovits et al, 2006). In contrast, men are focusing more on a group that includes identification with a social category such as college student, hometown or gender group (Sedikides & Brewer, 2001). Hence, women may place greater value in emotional feelings and attachment to individuals of a group, thus it is related to relational attachment. Men, on the other hand, may place greater value in a group identity, which is related to a collective attachment. This also applies in the brand relationship domain, as researchers found that for women, brand attachment has a stronger effect on love for the brand than the self-expressive brand. This leads also to trust. Trusting a brand and considering it reliable is particularly important for women, as trust strongly impacts commitment (Ergin, Özdemir & Parilti, 2005). In addition, in the cosmetics industry, brand recognition and attraction is essential as the market consists of high competition. Therefore, loyalty and commitment can be easily lost when products are seen as a damage to health. On the other hand, investing in marketing activities to gain a meaningful and salient brand that distinguishes from competitors, like packaging design or innovativeness, increases the likelihood to acquire consumer's loyalty and commitment (Ergin, Özdemir & Parilti, 2005).

Putting the cosmetic industry together with the studies about women's brand commitment, researchers found that women tend to be higher committed to and attracted by those products than men. More specifically, due to the increasing importance of the skin care brands, the body care segment was chosen to investigate the earlier stated hypothesis.

4 Methodology of the Directed Research Project

The primary research objective is to investigate whether temporary interaction with a competitive body lotion brand strengthens brand commitment towards a favored salient brand of a consumer.

The following hypotheses will be tested:

- H1: Consumers in a long-term brand commitment have an higher excitement level to competitive brands.
- H2: Consumers in the competitive brand condition still stick to their favored one.
- H3: Consumers in a long-term commitment increase their anticipated consumption of their favored body lotion when they are interested in a competitive brand.
- H4: Consumers in a long-term commitment increase their anticipated consumption of their favored body lotion when being exposed with a competitive brand.

4.1 Research Design

A research design is defined as “the logical sequence that connects the empirical data to a study’s initial research questions and, ultimately, to its conclusions” (Yin, 2014, p. 28). The choice of an adequate research design is a decision that greatly impacts the project proceeding. A quantitative method is used to meet the purpose of this study, estimate the quantitative effect of the causal variables upon the variable that they influence. Moreover, a conclusive and in specific, a causal research design with an experimental setting will be used, since this work project is regarded as a pilot experiment. Pilot experiments can be defined as a small scale preliminary study, which then can be adjusted. They give insights in a topic and are often used before a large-scale quantitative research is carried out (Harper Collins Publishers, 2016).

4.2 Sample Size and Data Collection

A questionnaire approach was considered to be the most effective method for collecting primary data for fulfilling the purpose of studying women’s brand commitment in the body care market, while they have interactions with a competitive or their favored brand.

Data was collected through questionnaires completed by 82 female cosmetics consumers in Portugal aged between 18 and 65 as well as English speaking. Working

women, housewives and students mainly from Nova SBE in Portugal were interviewed. In this study, the sampling unit is the individual consumer who uses cosmetic products. The questionnaire was conducted face-to-face and included three main parts. The first part consisted of their brand commitment level towards their own favored brand. The second part consisted of a promotional material of either a competitive or their own favored brand. The last part consisted of actual exposure of a body care brand that was either their favored or a competitive brand followed by some personal questions. Based on background and theoretical information and a small field research within malls and supermarkets, three main body lotions were used for the questionnaire: NIVEA, Dove, and Rituals. Using more than one brand allowed to collect more data about different body lotions and consumer's commitment towards them.

The questions included in the questionnaire were intended to study purchasing behaviors as well as commitment levels to understand their preferences regarding cosmetic products and about commitment issues. Likert scales were used for most of the questions involving purchasing decisions and additional questions concerned demographic attributes of respondents.

5 Data Analysis, Results and Discussion

The current research was conducted with 36 respondents answering a questionnaire with their favored body lotion brand and 46 respondents answering a questionnaire with a competitive body lotion brand. Moreover, 27 were answering the NIVEA questionnaire with 12 respondents in the favored and 15 in the competitive part, 31 respondents the Dove questionnaire with 14 in the favored and 17 in the competitive part and finally, 24 the Rituals questionnaire with just 10 in the favored and 14 in the competitive part. Most of the 82 respondents were young, with 51.2% aged between 18-25, 25.6% aged between 26-35 and 23.3% allocated to the other age ranges (See: Appendix C, Questionnaire Analysis from SPSS) . As it could be expected, there was a significant proportion of young adults in the sample size as the experimental study was mainly done at a university.

5.1 Commitment Level

During the questionnaire the respondents had to answer several questions about their commitment level and purchasing behavior of their own favored brand. At first, participants answered three questions about their usage, purchasing behavior and duration of their relationship with the brand. By computing the means of each question, we can see, that the participants are using their body lotions about 3-6 times per week with a mean of 2.96. Moreover, the mean of the duration item is 2.54, meaning that participants are using their body lotions between 6 months and 2 years on average (See Appendix).

These means implicate that the commitment level of the participants in general is not very high. Due to the fact that more younger adults participated, a correlation analysis between the age and the duration of a relationship was done, in order to see, if age has an impact on the duration.

Correlations			
		Age Range	Duration
Age Range	Pearson Correlation	1	,109
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,328
	N	82	82
Duration	Pearson Correlation	,109	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,328	
	N	82	82

Table 1: Correlation between Age and Relationship Duration.

With a correlation analysis (See Appendix), the age range and the relationship duration were analyzed further, in order to see, if there is a positive correlation between those two variables. With the Pearson's correlation of 0.109 (Table 1), a positive correlations was proven. Although the relationship is not very strong, it implicates that, the higher the age range of a participant, the longer is the relationship between a consumer and a brand. This indicates also, that older participants have a higher committed relationship towards body lotion brands.

The following five questions implicated questions from Beatty and Kahle (1988; eg. "When another brand as my favored one has a promotion, I would rather purchase it than my favored one.") about emotional loyalty on a 7-point likert scale (1:Strongly disagree, 7: Strongly agree). Those items were averaged in order to gain one compounded measure for brand commitment and the different levels of each respondent ($\alpha=0.756$). According to Pallant (2010, p.6), a coefficient of 0.7 and higher indicates sufficient correlation between the items, indicating that the items measure a particular underlying component. Although the item 'Switching Behavior' showed a negative correlation between the other items, it is still an important factor to determine the level of commitment. Therefore, the item will be kept.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
,756	,725	5

Table 2: Reliability Statistics of the Commitment Likert Scale.

5.2 Hypothesis Tests and Findings

For the 'Promotional Material Part' of this study, the participants had to look at promotional pictures of the different brands that were used for the questionnaires. Depending on their condition (Favored or Competitive), they saw either their favored brand or a competitive brand. After watching the material for a short amount of time (about 5 sec.), they had to answer several questions regarding their attraction, temptation, excitement, arousal and anticipated consumption behaviors. The exact same questions applied in the 'Exposure Part' in order to be consistent and accurate. The

difference was that participants had a mere exposure by trying a body lotion brand. The respondents had to imagine to be in a supermarket and trying a tester of the brand they just saw before. In this way, a direct comparison between the two parts could be ensured for the hypothesis.

- H1: Consumers in a long-term brand commitment have a higher excitement level to competitive brands.

In the following table, a Regression was done within the ‘Promotional Material Part’. This will be then compared to the ‘Exposure Part’ in order to analyze the duration of a relationship with the excitement towards a brand.

Table 3: Regression Analysis ,Promotional Material’ Part

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,197 ^a	,039	,014	1,365

a. Predictors: (Constant), Respondent, Duration

Coefficients ^a					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	4,055	,648		,000
	Duration	-,208	,161	-,143	,199
	Respondent	,365	,304	,132	,233

a. Dependent Variable: Promotion Excitement

This model was slightly significant ($R^2 = 0.039$, $p = 0.211$), but the model is not fitting well. Looking at the Coefficients Duration ($B = -0.208$, $t = -1.295$, $p = 0.199$) and the condition factor Respondent ($B = 0.365$, $t = 1.201$, $p = 0.233$), there was no effect.

According to the regression and the results, the first hypothesis has to be rejected. This means that the duration of a relationship has no significant effect on the excitement level, as well as the Respondent’s condition. Although a correlation analysis showed a moderate relation between respondent’s condition and the level of excitement in both parts of the questionnaire (for part 1: $p = 1.3$; part 2: $p = 0.210$). The positive correlation was even higher in the exposure part (See Appendix: 3.2, a). As the multiple regression

looks at the combination of these variables to predict the outcome, the respondent's condition is no longer significantly associated.

- H2: Consumers in the competitive brand condition still stick to their favored one.

For the, a crosstab analysis was done to see the relations of the respondent's condition and the variable 'Stick to favorite'. The two tables of the 'Promotional Part' as well as of the 'Exposure Part' show that participants in the competitive condition still stick to their favored brand with higher amounts of percentage for the answers (See Appendix: 3.2, b.).

In the first part the participants answered with a percentage of 11% for "Unlikely", 20.7% for "Neutral", 22% for "Likely" and 2,4% for "Extremely Likely" in the competitive condition. Compared to the favored condition (1.2% - "Unlikely", 18.3% - "Neutral", 20.7% - "Likely", 3.7% - "Extremely Likely"), the competitive one was always higher (See Appendix).

To conclude, even though those participants looked at a competitive brand and tried a body lotion (mere exposure) participants still stick to their favored brand due to the fact that higher percentages were reached for the answers (especially the answer "Likely").

- H3: Consumers in a long-term commitment increase their anticipated consumption of their favored body lotion when they are interested in a competitive brand.

A multiple regression model was used to analyze the hypothesis. As the dependent variable the 'Promotion Usage Favored', which indicates the likelihood of using more of the favored brand, was used. For the independent variables, the duration of a relationship and the condition, in which the participants have been, were used.

Table 4: Multiple Regression Model for H3.

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	11,572	2	5,786	10,600	,000 ^b
	Residual	43,123	79	,546		
	Total	54,695	81			

a. Dependent Variable: Promotion Usage Favored

b. Predictors: (Constant), Duration, Respondent

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1,486	,351		4,235	,000
	Respondent	,349	,164	,212	2,123	,037
	Duration	,358	,087	,412	4,123	,000

a. Dependent Variable: Promotion Buying more Favored

With $R^2=0.212$, 21% of the dependent variable can be explained by the independent ones (See Appendix: 3.2, c). Regarding the ANOVA in Table 4, we can see that this model is significant with $p<0.05$. In the Coefficients table, we can see, that the variables Respondent (with the different conditions) and the variable duration are statistically significant with p values of 0.037 and 0.00 ($p<0.05$). Moreover a positive effect emerged with $B=0.349$ for 'Respondent' and $B=0.358$ for 'Duration'.

In conclusion, the hypothesis could be proven. Consumers that are in a longer committed brand relationship increase their anticipated consumption of their favored brand, even though they were exposed to a competitive brand by looking at a promotional material in the competitive condition.

- H4: Consumers in a long-term commitment increase their anticipated consumption of their favored body lotion when being exposed with a competitive brand.

For the last hypothesis, the same regression model was used. As the dependent variable the 'Exposure Usage Favored' was used for this regression analysis. The independent variables stayed the same.

Table 5: Multiple Regression Model for H4.**ANOVA^a**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	14,793	2	7,396	13,448	,000 ^b
	Residual	43,451	79	,550		
	Total	58,244	81			

a. Dependent Variable: Exposure Usage Favored

b. Predictors: (Constant), Respondent, Duration

Coefficients ^a					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	1,682	,352		,000
	Duration	,438	,087	,488	,000
	Respondent	,226	,165	,133	,000

a. Dependent Variable: Exposure Usage Favored

Regarding the regression model within the experimental part of the questionnaire, the following results were gained:

With $R^2=0.254$, 25% of the dependent variable can be explained by the independent ones (See Appendix: 3.2, d). The ANOVA model in table 5 shows that this model is significant, we can see that this model is significant with $p<0.05$. In the Coefficients table, we can see, that the variables Respondent (with the different conditions) and the variable duration are statistically significant with p values of 0.00 ($p<0.05$) for both independent variables. Moreover a positive effect emerged with $B=0.438$ for 'Respondent' and $B=0.226$ for 'Duration'.

Finally, a greater effect on the dependent variable can be seen. Moreover, consumers that are in a longer committed brand relationship increase their anticipated consumption of their favored brand, although they were exposed to a competitive brand by having a mere exposure (trying a body lotion brand) in the competitive condition.

6 Conclusion and Recommendations

The following part contains the final conclusion of the work project and its findings, the limitations that applied in the current research and further recommendations for further research projects.

6.1 Conclusion

The proven hypothesis H2, H3 and H4 as well as the correlation analysis of H1 lead to the conclusion that the central research question (“Do consumers, who feel temporary interested towards another brand, become more or less committed to their favored body care brand?”) can be answered. Even though consumers were more excited in the competitive condition, which can be seen in the correlation analysis of H1, consumers of this condition also wanted to stick to their favored brand more. In addition, the last two hypothesis proved that long-term committed consumers are even increasing their usage of their favored brand after exposure to a promotional picture and the actual test of a body lotion brand on their skin. Therefore, it can be said that consumers transfer their excitement and attraction of a competitive brand towards their own favored one. Another interesting finding is that the age range was an important factor for brand commitment in the body care industry. The higher the age range is, the longer is the commitment towards a body lotion brand.

In sum, the work project indicates that temporary interest either indicates that exposure to a non-preferred brand increases committed consumers’ desire to consume more of their favored brand.

6.2 Limitations

Due to the limited amount of pages for this research project, the focus within the literature review was on brand commitment, brand infidelity and its determinants. Further explanations and definitions of the broader area of relationship marketing as well as the differences between commitment and loyalty had to be shortened.

Moreover, the actual research was conducted mainly at a university due to the difficult conditions in front of a mall or within a city. As the questionnaire contained small experiments, the conditions, like tables to write on or biased answers due to limited time of respondents or noise, weren’t always met. Biased answers could have been also arisen with younger adults (18-25, 26-35), as they were often asked at the university and participated in smaller groups. In addition, the questionnaire could have been shortened

and focused more on relevant variables for the presented hypothesis. Also, the questionnaires contained three different brands in the promotional material part, but with a similar appearance to ensure the equality for each condition and the comparison within the quantitative analysis. Nevertheless, participants could have been biased, especially within the Rituals Questionnaire, as the promotional material was slightly more different than the others from NIVEA and Dove.

Due to the limited amount of pages, the most important results for the hypothesis have been presented based on the statistical data from SPSS.

6.3 Recommendations for further Research

It is highly recommended for future research to expand the span of factors that have an impact on brand commitment, as well as to study different product categories and even services more deeply in order to get an in depth and more clear picture about real relationship between the different product/service factors and brand commitment. As the chosen product category 'body lotion' is a highly competitive market. Moreover it is recommended to test the hypothesis with a larger sample size to get a more accurate result that can be generalized as the current research is seen as a pilot test. In addition, the scope of the questionnaires used in the current research, must be improved.

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